

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9529

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 5045

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TW

SUBJ: APPARENT UNWILLINGNESS OF ROC TO GRANT RE-ENTRY
TO US MISSIONARY WENDELL KARSEN

1. DR. M.S. NOORDHOFF, REPRESENTING REFORMED CHURCH OF AMERICA IN TAIWAN, VISITED CHARGE AUGUST 17 TO DISCUSS CASE OF WNEDELL KARSEN, A FELLOW AMERICAN MISSIONARY WHOSE RE-ENTRY PERMIT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN LIFTED BY THE ROC. NOORDHOFF EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD ASSUMED FOR SOME TIME THAT KARSEN WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO TAIWAN FOLLOWING HIS CURRENT FURLOUGH IN THE US BECAUSE HE WAS SO INDISCREET, AND SOMETIMES OUTSPOKEN, IN HIS SUPPORT OF VARIOUS TAIWANESE POLITICAL FIGURES. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY MAJOR BREACH OF RULES BY KARSEN.

2. NOORDHOFF ASKED IF EMBASSY COULD FIND OUT FROM ROC AUTHORITIES WHAT THEIR SPECIFIC OBJECTIONS WERE. IF ROC RESPONSE WERE NOT TOTALLY ARBITRARY, HE WOULD THEN: A) ASK THE REFORMED CHURCH IN US TO DETER KARSEN FROM ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT WOULD HAMPER HIS COLLEAGUES HERE; AND B) MAKE CLEAR LOCALLY THAT THE REFORMED CHURCH WAS NOT ENGAGED IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

3. CHARGE SAID WE HAD ALREADY INQUIRED OF MOFA BUT STILL HAD NO ANSWER. HE ALSO EXPLAINED GENERAL EMBASSY
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POSITION AS ONE OF WILLINGNESS TO INQUIRE IN CASES OF

THIS KIND, WILLINGNESS TO SUGGEST ROC RECONSIDERATION IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT GENERAL UNWILLINGNESS TO INTERVENE ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ENGAGED IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON TAIWAN. NOORDHOFF ACCEPTED THIS APPROACH.

4. CHARGE COMMENTED THAT WE WERE ACQUAINTED WITH KARSSEN WHO HAD IN THE PAST CONFIDENTIALLY INFORMED US OF BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES WHICH SEEMED ALMOST SURE TO RUN AFOUL OF THE GARRISON COMMAND. (FYI IN A MARCH 28, 1973 CONVERSATION, KARSSEN ASKED AN EMBASSY OFFICER VARIOUS QUESTIONS CONCERNING POSSIBLE POLITICAL ASSYLUM FOR KUO YU-HSIN, AN OPPOSITION LEADER, AND ALSO MENTIONED THAT "HIS PREDECESSORS IN THE MISSION" HAD ENGINEERED PEN MING-MIN'S ESCAPE.)

5. CHARGE AGREED WE WOULD PURSUE INQUIRY WITH MOFA, MAKING CLEAR IN THE PROCESS THAT THE REFORMED CHURCH WAS SEEKING INFORMATION AND NOT NECESSARILY TRYING TO CONDONE THE BEHAVIOR OF ANY PARTICULAR MEMBER. NOORDHOFF HIMSELF AGREED IT MIGHT BE WISE AT SOME POINT IF HE WERE TO VISIT MOFA TO EXPLAIN THE REFORMED MISSION'S POLICY OF AVOIDING LOCAL POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT. GLEYSTEN

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